

Juvenile Corrections Officer

Work Activities and Competences

From Job Analysis Research Conducted by the Board of Corrections

Introduction

The following work activities and competencies were identified as major job dimensions of the majority of juvenile corrections officers who work in county operated juvenile halls, camps and ranches throughout the State of California. Part 1. consists of 12 major work activities of a juvenile corrections officer followed by sample tasks that relate to each activity. Part 2. consists of 24 competencies identified as important for effective performance of the work activities. This information may be of use to local jurisdictions in the selection, training and performance evaluation of their juvenile corrections officers

Since this research is based on the elements most common to multiple jurisdictions throughout the state, these work activities and competencies may differ in your jurisdiction. Therefore, each county should compare their specific operations with those reflected in the statewide research. For more in-depth information about the job analysis research, please refer to the Job Analysis Report for Juvenile Corrections Officer – 2002.

For questions or more information, please contact the Standards and Training for Corrections (STC) Division of the Board of Corrections, (916) 445-5073.

PART 1. WORK ACTIVITIES

Work Activity 1

Supervising Juveniles

Monitoring, directing and controlling the activity of juveniles during daily care, recreation, work details, and activities inside and outside the facility. Maintaining appropriate close supervision and security over juveniles to prevent self-injuries, accidents, fights, escapes, and other negative incidents. Enforcing rules and disciplinary actions when appropriate. Adhering to appropriate security procedures when escorting juveniles.

Example Job Tasks: (Note: Work activity is not limited to these examples.)

- Maintain discipline without causing unnecessary tension in a situation.
 - Maintain visual contact with all juveniles.
 - Account for location and status of juveniles to ensure each is in his/her proper place.
 - Make security rounds/checks; and make visual check of juveniles (e.g., room checks, hall checks).
 - Escort juveniles individually or in groups to and from locations within facility (e.g., classrooms, work details, infirmary, court holding room, interview, visiting, or phone rooms).
 - Transport juveniles individually or in groups to and from locations outside the facility (e.g., other facilities, recreational centers, law enforcement agencies, hospitals, courts, airports).
 - Lock and unlock manual or electronic rooms/dormitories and other gates/doors.
 - Supervise juveniles' activity in exercise room or yard, and in dining hall, cafeteria, or food service area.
 - Supervise contact visits in order to prevent smuggling of contraband or other unauthorized or illegal activities.
 - Detain juveniles who commit a crime in the facility.
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Work Activity 2

Searching and Maintaining Security

Conducting searches, inspections, and counts (of juveniles, visitors, mail, facility, etc.) with thoroughness and accuracy, in a timely manner. Initiating special searches when appropriate. Verifying information and identities, securing evidence, and making security checks.

Example Job Tasks: (Note: Work activity is not limited to these examples.)

- Check/search all areas accessible to juveniles (e.g., dayrooms, kitchen, library, visiting rooms, recreational areas) for contraband, weapons, or other evidence of unauthorized or illegal activities.
- Conduct security checks of rooms, room fixtures, bars, locks, windows, doors, kitchen equipment.
- Search transportation vehicles for weapons, contraband, and/or drugs.
- Conduct pat search of juveniles.
- Conduct strip search of juveniles.
- Search juvenile for weapons, contraband, and/or drugs, before and after transporting.
- Identify, seize, secure, preserve and/or dispose of evidence/contraband material.
- Screen and/or search visitors or their belongings; deny visit to visitors who do not pass screen.
- Search articles, packages, property, money left by visitors for juveniles.
- Count juveniles.
- Verify juvenile counts against roster, log, or computer-listed numbers.
- Do facility/unit population counts (e.g., weekly count of juveniles in the facility/unit, number of admissions and releases, transfers).
- Verify tray and utensil counts.
- Report count discrepancy to supervisor or central control.

Work Activity 3

Investigating and Detecting Problems

Investigating suspicious activities, incidents, and situations. Identifying illegal activity and potentially dangerous conditions (e.g., contraband possession/use, gang conflict, etc.). Taking appropriate steps to prevent problems before they occur. Recognizing signs of health problems, suicide risk, assaults, etc., and taking appropriate action to protect the well being of juveniles.

Example Job Tasks: (Note: Work activity is not limited to these examples.)

- Monitor juveniles for behavioral characteristics (e.g., violence, gang affiliation).
- Observe/monitor attitudes and conduct of juveniles, watching for signs of potential disturbance, medical or psychiatric needs, or signs of drug or alcohol use.
- Anticipate, monitor and intervene in disputes between juveniles (before a fight occurs).
- Monitor juveniles at high risk (e.g., suicide, medical).
- Notice subtle changes in group behavior patterns (e.g., noise level, type of interactions).
- Notice subtle changes in individual behavior patterns (e.g., change in eating or sleeping behavior).
- Investigate disturbances or suspicious activities.
- Investigate accidents or crimes that occur within the facility (e.g., interview witnesses and suspects, collect and preserve evidence, and/or take photographs).
- Listen for unusual sounds or sounds that may indicate illegal activity or disturbance (e.g., whispering, scuffling, sudden quiet or change in noise level, horn honking, rattling of chain link fence).
- Watch for indication of illegal activity or disturbance.
- Identify indicators of gang affiliation.

Work Activity 4

Analyzing and Making Recommendations

Evaluating juvenile records and behavior and making recommendations about their detention, activities, care, and treatment. Planning and organizing activities and transportation for juveniles.

Example Job Tasks: (Note: Work activity is not limited to these examples.)

- Screen juveniles to determine if medical/mental health attention is needed before booking.
- Interview juvenile in order to classify juvenile (for example, according to security risk factors) and assign housing.
- Conduct and write initial evaluation on individual juveniles, including an assessment of youth's background, capabilities, problem areas.
- Evaluate and grade juveniles' behavior for merit lists, leadership programs, daily point and/or "good week" systems.
- Plan and schedule outdoor recreational activities.
- Assign job duties to juveniles (based on abilities and behavior).
- Make recommendations for program advancement/graduation.
- Make suggestions regarding changes in policies, procedures, or rules.
- Gather information necessary to effect administrative and disciplinary transfers.
- Participate in the classification of assigned juveniles.
- Plan transportation route.

Work Activity 5

Report Writing

Writing reports (e.g., incident, evaluation, disciplinary, escape, use of force), correspondence, and other narrative reports that are clear, complete, accurate, and concise; writing reports in a timely manner.

Example Job Tasks: (Note: Work activity is not limited to these examples.)

- Write incident reports for rule violations/unusual situations.
- Write disciplinary reports.
- Write escape reports and/or supplementary escape reports.
- Write “use of force” reports.
- Prepare individual evaluation reports (e.g., case review committee reports).

Work Activity 6

Record Keeping

Accurately completing forms, logs, and inventories necessary for the correct and efficient booking, receiving, and releasing of juveniles, operation of a facility, and daily custody of juveniles.

Example Job Tasks: (Note: Work activity is not limited to these examples.)

- Record all activities or incidents occurring during shift, in daily journal or log.
- Fill out Juvenile Hall booking sheets.
- Perform paperwork necessary for releases (e.g., home supervision, electronic monitoring, “in-custody”).
- Update daily rosters recording special status (e.g., security risks, activity restrictions) and/or requests for special escort (e.g., to court, clinic).
- Log all juvenile movement in and out of rooms, units, or facility (e.g., transportation, transfers, bookings, discharges, and work details).
- Log facility/unit inspections, security checks, disposition of juveniles’ property/clothing.
- Log facility equipment (e.g., keys, OC spray, radios) in and out.
- Keep inventory of all dangerous tools/weapons/utensils.

Work Activity 7

Handling Emergencies

Working effectively and taking appropriate actions in emergency or crisis situations (e.g., injuries, suicide attempts, fires, escapes, rioting, physical fights between juveniles or attacks upon staff). Using sound judgment and following proper procedures in using physical force or restraints, sounding and responding to alarms, enlisting and providing appropriate assistance; and rendering appropriate first aid. This includes demonstrated performance in job simulation exercises and drills. Note: The focus of this work activity is on judgment and following procedures. Physical ability is not included here (it is to be described later in a separate work activity).

Example Job Tasks: (Note: Work activity is not limited to these examples.)

- Evacuate juveniles from area or facility (e.g., because of fire).
- Activate alarm system to alert all staff in case of an emergency (e.g., medical, fights, fire).
- Dispatch help in emergencies or disturbances.
- Respond according to facility policies in emergency situations (e.g., suicide attempt, bomb threat, medical emergencies).
- Assist personnel in another unit/cottage in an emergency.
- Extinguish or help extinguish fire.
- Conduct fire, earthquake, or evacuation drills.
- Administer CPR to juveniles or coworkers.
- Render first aid other than CPR to juveniles or coworkers.
- Defend oneself or others using less lethal force (e.g., OC spray, baton, hand holds, etc.).
- Physically subdue or restrain a violent/resisting juvenile by yourself.
- Physically subdue or restrain a violent/resisting juvenile with the help of another person.

Work Activity 8

Counseling

Conducting individual and group counseling. Developing treatment plans and goals, and evaluating progress. Providing “on-the-spot” counseling (crisis intervention). Coaching and encouraging juveniles in volunteer activities and schoolwork; assisting with emotionally distressed, withdrawn, or self-destructive juveniles. Obtaining medical or psychiatric help for juvenile when needed.

Example Job Tasks: (Note: Work activity is not limited to these examples.)

- Obtain appropriate help for juveniles in need of medical or psychiatric care.
- Conduct on-the-spot (e.g., crisis intervention) counseling with juveniles.
- Lead group problem solving discussions/youth forums with juveniles.
- Develop counseling goals and individualized treatment plans.
- Counsel juveniles on a one-to-one basis.
- Conduct formal or structured group counseling sessions with juveniles.
- Evaluate extent to which juvenile is making satisfactory progress toward program goals.
- Informally counsel juveniles (e.g., regarding conduct, discipline, etc.).

Work Activity 9

Interacting/Communicating with Juveniles

Explaining rules, policies, expectations, and consequences to juveniles. Listening and responding appropriately to juveniles' questions, concerns, complaints, and requests and providing appropriate assistance in working out problems. Respecting juveniles' feelings, rights, and privileges and gaining their cooperation and respect.

Example Job Tasks: (Note: Work activity is not limited to these examples.)

- Review a behavior/admission contract specifying expected behavior at the facility with the juvenile and obtain juvenile's signature.
- Respond to juveniles' questions or requests.
- Interview juveniles following a serious rule infraction and make a written report.
- Inform juvenile of reason for and type of disciplinary action to be enforced.
- Give instructions/directions orally to individual juveniles.
- Give instructions/directions orally to groups of juveniles.
- Instruct/train and supervise juveniles in safety procedures and safe use of tools or equipment.
- Provide positive feedback and encouragement to juveniles.
- Relay requests from juvenile, initiate referrals when a need for health care services is observed, and advocate for the minor when the need for services appears to be urgent.

Work Activity 10

Interacting/Communicating with People External to Staff

Conferring with the public and personnel external to the agency. Establishing cooperative relations with community, agencies, and other people external to the staff. Responding to inquiries from regulatory agencies, commissions, and the courts.

Example Job Tasks: (Note: Work activity is not limited to these examples.)

- Notify parents, guardians or spouse of juvenile's status and need to sign medical consent.
- Confer with others about status of juveniles (e.g., other counselors, probation officers, court personnel, mental health workers).
- Check visitors' passes or passes of non-facility personnel entering or leaving facility.
- Admit/release visitors, including attorneys, clergy and juveniles' visitors.
- Notify parents/guardians and/or probation officer of any change in juvenile's status (e.g., need for medical treatment, AWOL, discipline or behavior problems).
- Answer questions/provide information to various regulatory agencies and commissions (e.g., Board of Corrections, Juvenile Justice Commission).
- Testify in court.

Work Activity 11

Working with Internal Staff

Working cooperatively and effectively with co-workers, supervisors, and other internal staff. Following directions and providing assistance, coaching, and support when needed. Keeping staff completely informed regarding juvenile status, potential problems, and important shift information

Example Job Tasks: (Note: Work activity is not limited to these examples.)

- Talk to staff of the prior or oncoming shift to acquire or pass on information.
- Call central control or other appropriate area to inform them of juvenile movement (e.g., juvenile issued pass to go somewhere, juvenile sent to dining hall).
- Phone or otherwise report count to control; receive “all clear” for count.
- Report suspicious activity inside and outside facility (e.g., vehicles, persons) to supervisor or central control.
- Communicate orally with other juvenile corrections officers regarding operations within the facility.
- Attend staff meetings or confer with supervisors concerning operations/functioning.
- Attend and participate in training programs, classes, and seminars.
- Follow oral instructions from supervisor and others.
- Follow all relevant facility policies and procedures.
- Maintain confidentiality of information (e.g., medical, transportation destinations).
- Coach, train, or assist in training other facility personnel.
- Conduct on-the-job training for new personnel.

Work Activity 12

Performing Physically Demanding Work

Working with physical skill sufficient to handle emergency situations such as medical emergencies, defending one self, and pursuing, disarming, subduing and restraining juveniles. This includes demonstrated performance in job simulation exercises and drills.

Example Job Tasks: (Note: Work activity is not limited to these examples.)

- Run to the scene of a disturbance or emergency.
- Operate electronic gates, doors, or locks manually when the electronic mechanism fails.
- Physically subdue or restrain a violent/resisting juvenile by yourself.
- Physically subdue or restrain a violent/resisting juvenile with the help of another person.
- Physically separate two fighting juveniles with the help of another person.
- Defend self against a juvenile armed with a weapon (e.g., knife).
- Disarm and subdue juvenile armed with a weapon.
- Search areas for contraband that are not easy to access (e.g., under beds, in, behind, and around large equipment, vehicles).
- Handcuff a resisting juvenile.
- Apply restraint devices such as leg irons, travel restraints, leather restraints to a non-resisting juvenile.
- Place and secure juvenile in safety room.
- Perform room extractions.

PART 2. COMPETENCIES

1. **Oral Communication.** Speaks in a clear and understandable manner, and comprehends various types of information received orally (e.g., procedures, instructions, descriptions).
2. **Written Communication.** Writes in a clear and understandable manner, using correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation to produce documents that are organized, complete, and accurate.
3. **Problem Solving.** Analyzes, evaluates, and combines information to arrive at correct conclusions. Makes sound judgments regarding the accuracy of information, and applies rules and procedures to come up with logical answers and determine appropriate priorities.
4. **Vigilance.** Remains alert and focused during periods of slow or repetitive work activity (e.g., monitoring). Concentrates on tasks and is not easily distracted.
5. **Accuracy with Written Information.** Accurately reviews, identifies, and verifies detailed visual information (e.g., checking names, numbers, codes, pictures) in a timely manner.
6. **Multi-tasking.** Quickly and accurately performs multiple tasks at the same time, in order of importance, shifting back and forth between tasks and/or sources of information.
7. **Retention of Information.** Retains and recalls important job information such as procedures, rules, people, and events.
8. **Assertiveness.** Takes charge of situations and groups, influences and motivates others; speaks up, is candid, and confronts people when necessary, without hesitation.
9. **Emotional Control.** Remains calm and in control, and does not overreact or express negative emotions (e.g., anger) in adverse, stressful, life-threatening, or time-critical situations.
10. **Stress Tolerance.** Performs effectively under stressful conditions and copes with prolonged exposure to job stressors (e.g., time pressure, emergencies, threats, physical altercations).
11. **Attention to Detail.** Is thorough and carries out tasks with a concern for the inclusion and correctness of details.
12. **Self-Assurance.** Interacts confidently with individuals and groups at all levels; is not easily fooled or persuaded into changing course of action.
13. **Decisiveness.** Makes well-reasoned decisions in a timely manner, sometimes in situations where there are no standard procedures.
14. **Agreeableness.** Is courteous, cooperative, tactful, patient and friendly to others (e.g., co-workers, supervisors, and the public).
15. **Adaptability.** Adapts to unanticipated problems and conflicts; accepts changes (e.g., assignments or procedures); and changes roles based on requirements of the situation.

16. **Positive Attitude.** Demonstrates a positive, upbeat attitude when interacting with others; is not overly cynical, suspicious or distrustful of others; displays an interest and enjoyment in the job by putting energy into work; accepts constructive criticism.
17. **Teamwork.** Establishes and maintains effective working relationships with others; shares information, provides assistance, puts group goals ahead of personal goals and does fair share in a group effort; and does not allow personal differences to affect working relationships.
18. **Dependability.** Is reliable (e.g., maintains punctual, reliable attendance); takes ownership for work performed and ensures work is completed accurately and on time.
19. **Job Safety.** Proceeds in a careful, cautious, and prudent manner in performing job duties.
20. **Integrity.** Is fair, honest, impartial, and straightforward in dealing with others; honors commitments; is trustworthy; takes responsibility for failures and shares credit for successes; uses appropriate discretion and is sensitive to confidentiality; and demonstrates high ethical standards.
21. **Conformance to Rules and Regulations.** Performs work in compliance with laws, rules and regulations; accepts and conforms to standards of conduct and the authority structure of the organization.
22. **Motivation/Initiative.** Exerts the effort needed to attain goals; is determined and persistent; demonstrates a strong work ethic; works hard and does his/her best; proceeds on assignments without waiting to be told what to do; and works diligently without supervision.
23. **Willingness to Learn.** Willingly acquires new skills and knowledge, seeks out and uses feedback to improve performance, learns from experiences, and applies learning to new situations.
24. **Objectivity/Tolerance.** Interacts with people from a diverse population in an unbiased fashion, without letting personal prejudices affect interactions with others.